2: Bowers E-5 (1930-1931)1950 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

Coyote Woman went onto a hill. The wolf said, "Your husband who was like an enemy to you has been eaten up. Don't feel sorry for him, or I will never help you."

Before she went home, she cut deep gashes in her arms and legs with a flint knife and cut the sleeves from her dress. As she approached the village, she began to cry, and all the people ran out to learn the cause of her mourning. She said that her husband and all his party were dead.

She began doctoring the sick people the way she had formerly been instructed by the bear.[8] She examined her patients first to learn what caused the illness. Some were made ill by the snakes or bugs in their bodies; others from the influence of evil spirits; others from the loss of a god. She had a medicine song and a medicine root. If she found the pain was in one spot, she sucked with her mouth or a hollow horn, sometimes drawing out long slim worms or maggots of different colors. She pressed the stomach for pains located in the stomach or bowels and blew chewed-up cedar bark over the patient; when a person had a headache, she let out blood from the forehead.

The stone was burned so our people lost that. When Coyote Woman was old, she did not sell my mother the right to doctor, but my mother often heard her tell how she cured her patients. We have always believed since then that the bear was the greatest of all doctors.

Certain doctors were called upon to help women laboring in childbirth. Some of the women of the house would fill a pipe and place it before the woman they wished to act as midwife or doctor. The doctor gave instructions which must be carried out and set the price which was for the number of days she would serve. If she failed to help the patient in that time, she left to give another a chance to cure the patient. If the doctor failed to cure the patient in the time designated, the relatives might again place the pipe before her, and she was obliged to remain longer. Extra goods were then paid for the additional time. When the doctor entered the lodge where the woman in labor lived, she ordered all the men and small children out, and women then in their menstrual period were asked to stay away from the lodge. Should any woman during her menstrual period come into the lodge, sage was immediately burned in four places in the lodge, two fires being made of sage painted red and two of white sage.[9] If this was not done, it was believed that the patient might die. A special song was sung during the burning of the sage, for which the doctor received an additional fee. The doctor called in two young girls while the four fires were burning and asked them to doctor the patient in her stead by singing the medicine songs and dancing around the sick person. At the end of the songs, the two girls walked to the sick person and said, "You are well now," and left the lodge. The doctor then continued to administer to the sick woman.

The doctor selected an old woman to take the child as soon as it came. Women gave birth to children usually in bed or on a robe laid on the floor. The lodge was darkened, and only the doctor and the sick woman's mother were allowed inside. As soon as the child was born, a wide belt was bound tightly around the mother's abdomen. Because of the cost, many women did not engage a doctor unless difficulty was experienced.

8. Bear bundle rites were inherited in the Bear clan until the clan died out after the smallpox epidemic of 1837.

9. Apparently this practice was a part of each doctoring rite. Red sage represented the sun and white sage represented the moon.

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over from the women's camp. Afterward the trapper smoked. Each trapper, after eating, discussed happenings at the pit, and, from the information thus supplied, the leader offered suggestions for increasing the catch. When birds circled the bait but would not come down, it was suggested that raw meat be used. Sometimes the birds flew by without appearing to see the bait, and decoys were recommended.

The leader did not have a pit for his own use but remained in camp. However, if the wind was from the wrong direction in the morning and the men were out hunting game, he could go into any of the pits should the wind change to the west.

Evenings were spent in storytelling. The leader would acquaint the trappers with the myths associated with eagle-trapping. There were many of these myths, and a good leader would be able to consume every evening for the usual four weeks in camp without exhausting his stock. Each was related in great detail with endless repetitions. Some of the longer myths consumed four nights in telling; others were short and could be related in one night. All were expected to listen attentively while seated on a buffalo robe. Those who nodded were pinched with the bird stick. An example of the stories told is given in the Appendix.

The position of women in eagle-trapping ceremonies varied among bundle-owners. (1) Most bundle-owners prohibited women from entering the ceremonial lodge or looking inside. (2) Several bundle-owners had special rites to which women were invited when birds had been caught. (3) A few bundle-owners required a menstruating woman to come into the lodge and breathe the smoke from sage burned at the four corners of the fire pit.

Unless special rites relative to the women were purchased, they were required to stay away from the ceremonial lodge and its vicinity. The right to bring women into the lodge was a separate purchase not essential to trapping eagles. There were separate songs and a myth, giving the right to call in a menstruating woman, which could be purchased. It referred to the capture of the leader of the eagles who, in return for having her life spared, promised unusual success if her song was sung when a menstruating woman was brought into the lodge. The consensus of both

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Mandan and Hidatsa informants was that women took a more prominent place in Mandan than in Hidatsa ceremonies and that bringing women into the lodges was a Mandan rite that some Hidatsa bought. This native belief is borne out by a woman's right to perform the Okipa ceremony with her brother's assistance and to own bundles of deceased relatives until a successor had qualified.

In the selection of eagle-trapping territory, consideration was given to the suitability of the region for hunting. Some informants thought that not more than one-third of the days were suitable for catching eagles. When the winds were not from a westerly direction, the party went out hunting and received their orders from the Chief of the Hunters, whose place in the ceremonial lodge was near the head of the lodge on the left side and opposite the leader.

The office of Chief of the Hunters was filled by the leader when selecting the places for the men when first entering the lodge. In mythological times, Two Men[40] discovered Black Bear's cub carrying a clay pot in which he cooked his food mysteriously, and, resolving to live leisurely thereafter, they stole the vessel. The cub chased them into Dog Den Butte and captured them with his snare. Cub contemplated killing them, but they agreed to do the hunting[41] for the eagle-trappers if their lives were spared. In time they acquired the position of leaders of the hunters.

The eagle-trapping territory was distantly removed from the summer villages in a region not occupied permanently by any tribe.[42] Except for sites on the east side of the Missouri River, the territory was deeply eroded with isolated wooded areas along, and adjacent to, the principal streams. The badlands region along the Little Missouri River and its tributaries was a favorite habitat of the elk, black-tail deer, and mountain sheep. White-tail deer remained more or less in the wooded bottom lands of streams, while buffalo and antelope ranged in herds and bands on the high grass plains a few miles from the principal streams.

40. See my manuscript on "Hidatsa Social and Ceremonial Organization" for an account of the exploits of these two characters.

41. Their medicine was the arrow.

42. See map of eagle-trapping camps (Fig. 28).

4: Lowie E-5 (1910-1911) 1913
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575 After this speech, Big-thief returned to his place. Then all the Kit-
608 Foxes rose and brought presents of food to their fathers. Black-chest again
432 selected Good-bear for his individual Father, but explains that this was
527 not obligatory. Wounded-face was obliged to select a new father, for the one chosen by him in purchasing the Kit-Fox organization had been killed in battle; otherwise, he says he should have kept the same individual for his father in buying all the higher societies. On this occasion his choice fell on Little-crow, to whom he presented a kettleful of food as a token of his selection. Black-chest states that five of the fathers had been killed since the purchase of the Kit-Fox society.

575 Black-chest says that on this occasion the River Women did not aid the
432 purchasers, as both they and the latter had married. This obviously refers
431 to the period of the fathers' entertainment, as the same informant mentions a contribution by this women's organization to the initial payment (see p. 303). On the other hand, the Black Mouths attended the performance and brought food for the sellers.

575 At a height of about seven feet from the ground the fathers stretched a
778 rawhide rope between the two rear main posts. To each end of the rope
527 they attached a whip, and near its center they folded over it two red cloth
837 sashes. These sashes were considered sacred. The wife of one of the buyers
533 then rose, stripped naked and covering her genitalia with her hands, approached the rear of the fireplace. Rising on tiptoes, she seized one of the sashes, covered her nakedness again, pressed the sash to her breast and hung it up as before. Each one of the buyers' wives went through the same ceremony. During this performance the fathers were all singing. The women returned to their seats and put on their blankets. Each husband then said to his wife: "I will give you to my father, for I want his song. Perhaps he will pray for us, and it will be well for both of us."

575 Then the father and the woman offered to him went out together.
[841] Menstruating women were absolved from this performance, for they were not supposed to come to the lodge at all on such occasions. As a matter
837 of fact, Black-chest says that only very few fathers availed themselves of
432 the right surrendered to them, being generally afraid of ill luck if they did.
527 The form, however, was gone through by each wife on each of the twenty nights. Black-chest's wife told her husband that Good-bear merely took her outside, faced west with her and said, "Daughter-in-law, stop and
[782] stand there." Then he prayed as follows: "My gods, my son has given me his wife. I wish that my daughter-in-law may always enjoy a long and happy life, and I ask you in behalf of my son that he may conquer his enemies." After this prayer he bade the woman go back, and both returned to the lodge.